

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
4000 WEST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

DECEMBER 14, 2005, 7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Charles Yates, Chairman, Richard E. Railey, Jr., Ward Burton, Sherry Smith Crumley and Thomas A. Stroup, Interim Director Colonel W. Gerald Massengill, David K. Whitehurst

Chairman Yates called the meeting to order at 7:55 a.m. and David Whitehurst distributed copies of drafted policies to the Committee members for review. Staff presented an overview of the amendments that have been made to the following draft policies to respond to Committee member's requests. The Committee also discussed additional areas where policies are needed, and what was felt to be the appropriate level of interaction between Board members and Department staff.

Title: Acquisition of Lands, Waters, and Structures

Area of Concern: General Policies

Authority: Code of Virginia §29.1-103, 2.2-3705.1, 2., 5., 8., and 12., and §2.2-3711.A.3, and 6.

Version: 12142005

Adoption Date:

Effective Date:

Review Date:

Revision Date:

Statement of Purpose: The Code of Virginia charges the Board with the responsibility to acquire by purchase, lease, exchange, gift or otherwise, lands and waters in the Commonwealth for game and fish refuges, preserves or public shooting and fishing, public landings, wharves, or docks; to improve such lands and structures; and to confer upon the Director all such powers, authorities and duties as the Board possesses and deems necessary or proper to carry out these purposes.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries that all acquisitions be compatible with the mission of the Department. The Board further requires that such acquisitions shall be carried out by the Director according to all applicable law, regulations, policies and procedures. The Director shall establish guidelines and procedures to implement this policy.

Title: Constituency and Communications

Area of Concern: General Policies

Authority: Code of Virginia: §29.1-103; §29.1-109

Version: 12142005

Adoption Date:

Effective Date:

Review Date:

Revision Date:

Statement of Purpose: The intent of the policy is to clarify the constituency to which the agency will provide the primary mission-focused delivery of services.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board that the Department shall provide mission-related services to the public. Any member of the public requesting mission-related services or information will be considered a constituent of the Department.

The Department will develop programs and services to provide opportunities for the public to pursue its legitimate interest in the recreational enjoyment of the fish, boating and wildlife resources of the Commonwealth; to inform the public on the importance of healthy, viable wildlife resources; and to educate the public on the safe and ethical methods of enjoying the wildlife and boating resources.

Communication and service delivery to the public will consider the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds that exist in the public. Reasonable effort will be made to assure that communications, programs and services are tailored, whenever possible, to be relevant to the public.

Title: Ethical Behavior and Practices

Area of Concern: General Policies

Authority: Code of Virginia §29.1-103, §29.1-109

Version: 12142005
Adoption Date:
Effective Date:
Review Date:
Revision Date

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to describe the boundaries of prudent, ethical behavior within which the Department shall operate.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries that Department staff shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstances that are either imprudent or in violation of state or federal laws.

Department staff shall maintain the highest ethical standards and conduct to ensure the Department's credibility and the accomplishment of its mission.

Department staff shall use state resources to host, sponsor, or participate at events or activities that are open to the public or are mission relevant.

Title: Open Government

Area of Concern: General Policies

Authority: Code of Virginia §2.2-3100 - §2.2-3131, §2.2-3700 - §2.2-3714, §2.2-3800 - §2.2-3809, §29.1-103, and §29.1-109

Version: 12142005
Adoption Date:
Effective Date:
Review Date:
Revision Date

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department adheres to the values of open government and provide opportunities to have fair and frank exchanges of ideas between agency staff and the public.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries that the Department shall operate in full compliance with the provisions of the State's Administrative Process Act, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Government Data Collection and Dissemination

Practices Act, and the State and Local Government Conflicts of Interests Act in regards to public records owned by, prepared by, or in the possession of the Department.

The Department shall maintain open communications with the public, the Department's constituent groups and partners in wildlife conservation and boating, and the news media.

The Department will disseminate information, as appropriate, to the public through proper channels in an expeditious manner and will, when justified, protect the confidentiality of its transactions on the public's behalf.

Staff may communicate with Board members on topics that are directly related to the Department's mission. The Board encourages employees to work with agency management to address issues related to the Department's operations or policies.

Title:	Use of Scientific Principles and Procedures in Natural Resource Management
Area of Concern:	General Policies
Authority:	Code of Virginia §§29.1-103 and 29.1-109.A
Version:	12142005
Adoption Date:	
Effective Date:	
Review Date:	
Revision Date:	
Statement of Purpose:	The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is required by the Code of Virginia to employ scientific principles and procedures in the management of the Commonwealth's wildlife and natural resources. Additionally, in its Governance Manual, the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries has committed to deliberations and decisions that are based on sound scientific principles and procedures, as developed, researched, recognized, and accepted within the bounds of comprehensive professional wildlife resource management. The purpose of this policy is to affirm the Board's support for such an approach in all activities related to the management of wildlife populations and habitats, including the development, implementation, and enforcement of regulations intended to protect these resources.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries that the Department employs scientific principles and procedures, as developed, researched, recognized and accepted within the bounds of comprehensive professional wildlife resource management, in the management of the Commonwealth's wildlife and habitat resources. The recommendation, development and enforcement of Department policies, rules and regulations shall be based on commonly accepted scientific principles with regards to the daily operations of the Department staff.

Title: Mission Focus to Staff Activities

Area of Concern: General Policies

Authority: Code of Virginia: §29.1-103

Version: 12142005

Adoption Date:

Effective Date:

Review Date:

Revision Date

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to focus Department activities on mission-specific tasks.

Policy: It is the policy of the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries that staff will engage primarily in mission-specific tasks except for necessary activities that address issues of public safety or when expenses are fully reimbursed to the Department.

Committee members discussed the existing Board policies, with emphasis placed on A-1-90 that provides guidance on the format for Board policies. Staff recommended that the Committee adopt the format used for the draft policies being reviewed as the official format for Board policies and asked the Committee to rescind policy A-1-90. While recognizing that revisions are needed, staff also suggested rescinding policy A-5-93 pertaining to financial management. The Committee felt that these policies should remain effective until replacement policies are developed for Board approval.

Staff recommended to the Committee that it review, amend, rescind or replace existing policies in Group B: Fish and Wildlife, Group C: Lands and Facilities, and Group E: Licenses and Permits.

Mr. Stroup moved, seconded by Mr. Railey, passed unanimously by a show of hands vote, that the Policy Committee recommend the proposed policy revisions to the Board for adoption. (Ayes: Railey, Stroup, Yates, Burton and Crumley)

Mr. Railey moved, seconded by Mr. Stroup, passed unanimously in a show of hands vote, to rescind Board policies being replaced, with the exception of A-1-90 and A-5-93. (Ayes: Railey, Stroup, Yates, Burton and Crumley)

The Policy Committee plans to continue to work to develop needed policies.

As there was no further business, the Policy Committee meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Belle Harding
Board Secretary